

Commercial Satellite Imagery Request Process

The U.S. State Department can share U.S. government (USG) purchased commercial satellite imagery with approved recipients under certain conditions and Departmental clearance on an individual case-by-case basis. The Department's ability to facilitate commercial imagery requests is subject to Departmental determination that it is in the interest of the USG to share the requested imagery, as well as staffing and resource constraints.

Imagery can be requested in two ways. First, in the native imagery format (NITF or GeoTiff) if the organization has the capacity to receive, process, and work with raw high-resolution imagery data. Second, the Humanitarian Information Unit can host imagery web services that can be used for crowdsource mapping into the OpenStreetMap database. This option, referred to as Imagery to the Crowd or MapGive, works in conjunction with the Humanitarian OpenStreetMap Team (HOT) and the Tasking Manager application they maintain. See the webpages for Imagery to the Crowd (<https://hiu.state.gov/ittc/ittc.aspx>) and MapGive (<http://mapgive.state.gov/>) for more information.

The request process is similar for either option, the key is a clear justification for why the imagery is needed. Beyond the justification, the requesting organization should be able to provide specific answers to the questions below. In dialogue with the Department, it may be determined that further refinement of the requirements or narrowing of the requested scope is necessary.

Imagery Request Questions

Justification and Reason for Use

What is the purpose of your imagery request?

What sort of analysis do you intend to conduct using the requested imagery?

What sort of data do you intend to create?

What sort of products do you intend to generate using the imagery or imagery-derived data, and how will they be disseminated?

Geographic Extent

What are the specific points and/or bounding coordinates for your area(s) of interest?

Please include a geographic file containing your Area of Interest, a Google Earth file (.kml) or GIS shapefile (.shp) format are preferred.

Temporal Bounds

What is timeframe (specific date, range of dates, and/or pre-event and post-event dates) required for the requested coverage?

Imagery Specifications

Do you require panchromatic, multispectral, or both?

Do you require geo-rectified or ortho-rectified coverage?

What file format is required for receipt of the imagery? (NITF, GeoTiff, etc)

How do you wish to receive the imagery, and if applicable, what if your ftp information? (Note that at present imagery data can only be sent directly to a requesting organization's ftp site, or DVDs can be sent via mail.)

Terms of the NextView license are here:

https://hiu.state.gov/Documents/NextView/USG_NextView_ImageryLicense.txt

Please email all requests to hiu_info@state.gov with Imagery Request in the subject line